WORLD OF SUSPENSE

APR.

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TALES TO HOLD YOU IN AN ICY GRIP OF SUSPENSE!

WHY WAS THERE "A STRANGER AMONG US?"

ALL BRAND-NEW STORIES!

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Sell these popular Patriotic and Religious Mottoes

SEND US NO MONEY IN ADVANCE

Just write and ask us to send you 40 of these beautiful glittering mottoes which the public likes so well. Sell them easily and quickly to your friends and neighbors for only 35¢ each. At the end of 14 days send back, if you wish, all mottoes you have not sold, and send us only 25¢ for each you have sold. You keep all the rest of the money.

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REMEMBER: No money is needed in advance. You take no risks. You can return all the mottoes you do not sell. You do not pay shipping costs or split your commission. You keep all the profit on each sale.

WRITE FOR COMPLETE DETAILS TO

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Dept. MF P. O. Box 1004
Nashville 3, Tennessee

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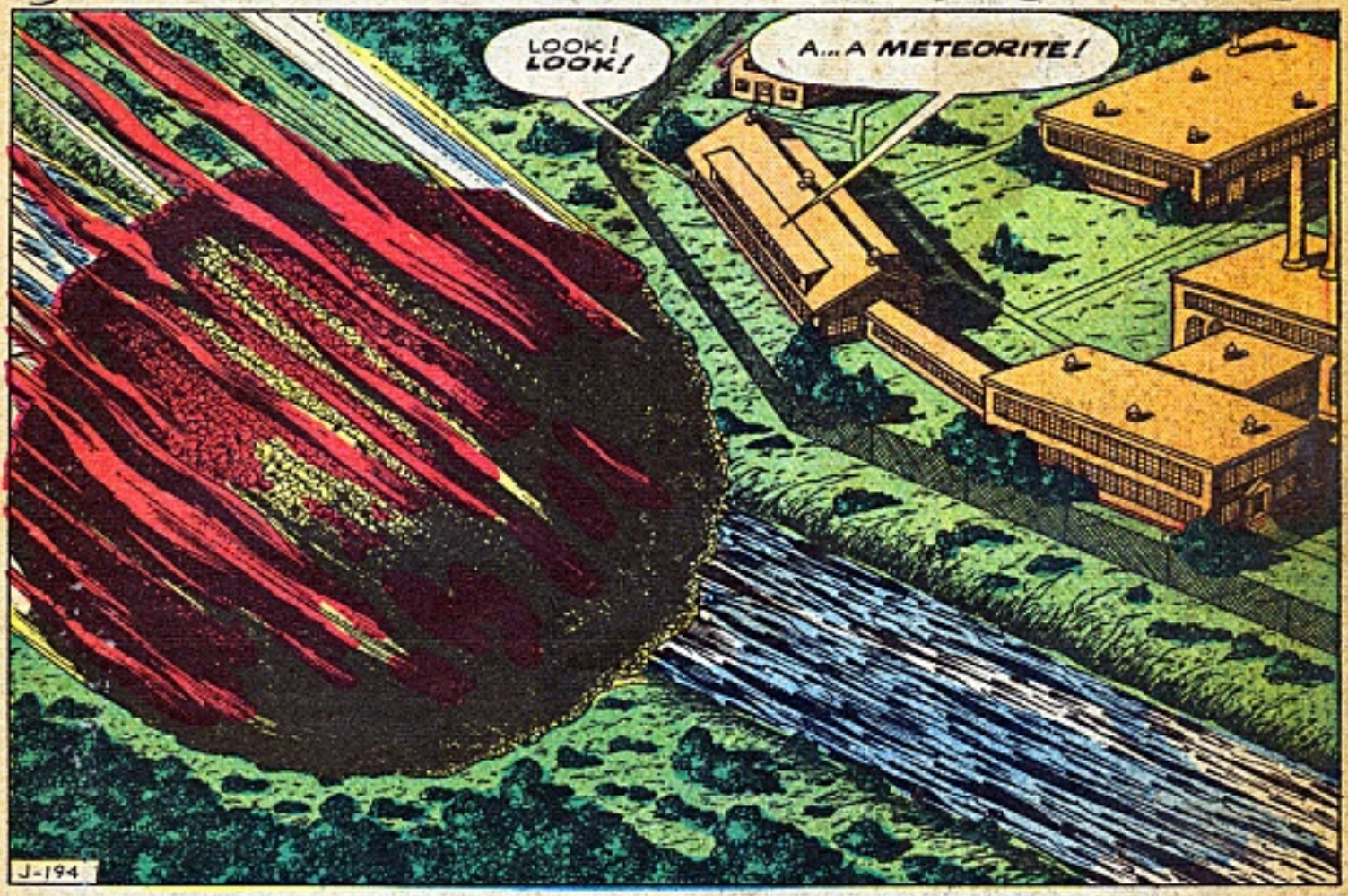
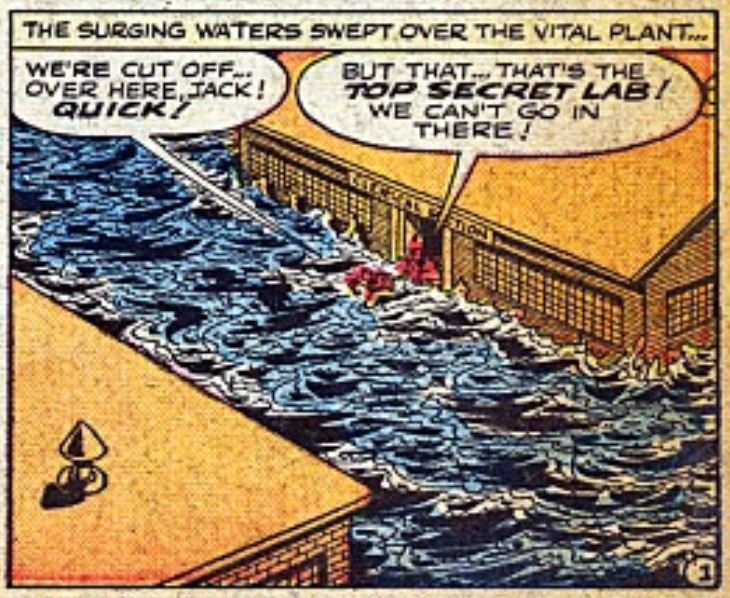
IT STRUCK WITHOUT WARNING...A GLOWING BALL OF ORE HURLED FROM SPACE BY SOME FANTASTIC UPHEAVAL OF THE UNIVERSE! AND THEN CAME THE AFTERMATH... WHEN THE STARTLED EMPLOYEES OF SCIENCE LABORATORY #342 LEARNED THERE WAS...

A STRANGER AMONG US





NEVER MIND THE SECRETS! THIS IS A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!
S-SURE, ANDY...
CRASH
SECURITY LAB No.

THE TWO CLERICAL WORKERS FOUND TEMPORARY SAFETY WITHIN THE SECRET LABORATORY...
WHEW... MADE IT! HEY... LOOK OVER THERE!
W-WHO'S THAT?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MAC? I'M ANDY HILLER, AND THIS IS JACK FIELDS... WE'RE FROM THE CLERICAL DEPARTMENT!
I AM PERFECTLY WELL... FORTUNATELY THE CRASH DID NOT HARM ME!

SWELL! WE KNOW THIS IS SECRET STUFF IN HERE, BUT WE HAD TO BREAK IN TO SAVE OUR LIVES!
I UNDERSTAND! JUST MAKE YOURSELVES COMFORTABLE! IF WE REMAIN CALM, HELP WILL COME SOON! BEING TRAPPED HERE DOES NOT BOTHER ME!

AND SO THE CATASTROPHE BROUGHT THE THREE MEN TOGETHER... AND AS THE HOURS PASSED, THEY BECAME FRIENDS.
GOSH, THIS REMINDS ME OF WHEN I WAS CAUGHT IN THE OHIO FLOOD! WHAT AN EXPERIENCE!
YEAH... BUT YOU HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING UNTIL YOU'VE BEEN IN AN EARTHQUAKE I WAS... IN JAPAN!

HOW ABOUT YOU, MISTER? IS THIS THE FIRST CALAMITY YOU'VE EVER BEEN CAUGHT IN?
WELL, NO... ONCE BEFORE, WHEN I WAS EXPLORING AN UNKNOWN CIVILIZATION, I HAD A MOST FANTASTIC EXPERIENCE INDEED!

IT WAS A WORLD SUCH AS I NEVER DARED DREAM EXISTED! PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO HEAR OF IT?
SURE... IT SOUNDS MIGHTY INTERESTING!

"I BECAME SEPARATED FROM MY COLLEAGUES DURING THE EXCURSION INTO THE UNCHARTED LAND! SUDDENLY..."
LIGHTNING! B-BUT A THOUSAND TIMES GREATER THAN ANY I HAVE EVER SEEN BEFORE!

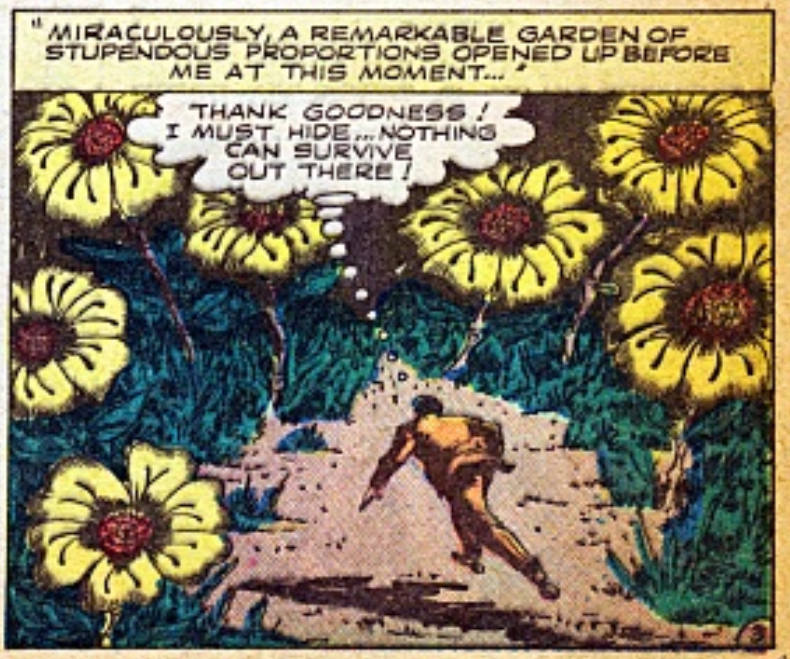
"FEAR CLUTCHED MY HEART AS RAINDROPS AS LARGE AS BALLOONS BEGAN TO FALL..."
SHELTER! I MUST FIND SHELTER!

WH-WHAT KIND OF A PLACE HAVE WE FOUND? WH-WHO COULD EXIST UNDER SUCH A GIGANTIC STORM?

"FINALLY THE SKY CLEARED... BUT AS I STEPPED FROM MY CONCEALMENT, FATIGUED WITH FRIGHT..."
I...I MUST FIND MY WAY BACK... WH-WHA...? GREAT MOON-DUST! WH-WHAT'S THAT AWFUL SOUND?
ROARR

"MY SENSES SPUN AS THE NOISE TORE AT MY EARDRUMS! THEN I LOOKED UP TO SEE A GIGANTIC JUGGERNAUT THUNDERING TOWARD ME!"
NO... NO!

"I RACED FOR MY LIFE AMID A DIN OF BRAIN-SHATTERING VOLUME!"
ROWRR


"MIRACULOUSLY, A REMARKABLE GARDEN OF STUPENDOUS PROPORTIONS OPENED UP BEFORE ME AT THIS MOMENT..."
THANK GOODNESS! I MUST HIDE... NOTHING CAN SURVIVE OUT THERE!

"SHORTLY, WHEN MY STRENGTH RETURNED, I CLIMBED ONE OF THE GIANT STEMS! THE WIND TORE AT MY CLOTHING..."
F-FANTASTIC! I MUST TRY TO ORIENT MYSELF... FIND MY WAY BACK! THIS WORLD WAS NOT MEANT FOR US!

"SUDDENLY, A HURRICANE WIND TORE THE FLOWER LOOSE..."
BUILDINGS... HIGHER THAN MOUNTAINS! GOOD GRIEF! WE'VE STUMBLED UPON A CIVILIZATION OF SUPER GIANTS!!

THE FLOWER LANDED LIKE A GIANT AIRSHIP IN THE VERY FIELD WHERE I HAD LOST MY FRIENDS! WHEN THEY HEARD MY STORY, IT WAS AGREED WE SHOULD RETURN LATER WITH AN ADDITIONAL FORCE...
HA! HA! HA! HO! HO!
HAW, HAW! WHAT A STORY!

BOY, YOU TOP-SECRET SCIENTISTS SURE CAN DREAM UP SOME CRAZY STORIES! HA! HA! SO YOU FOUND A CIVILIZATION OF GIANTS, EH?
INDEED I DID, SIR!
ANDY! THE RESCUE PARTY!

THANK GOODNESS! IT'S ONLY CRACKED!
YES, SIR! BUT ONE OF YOUR SCIENTISTS HAS BEEN TRAPPED BEHIND THERE FOR HOURS!

ONE OF OUR SCIENTISTS? WHY, EVERYONE BUT YOU TWO GOT OUT OF THE LAB OKAY!
HE'S GONE! BUT HE WAS RIGHT BEHIND THAT GLASS! I SWEAR IT!

GLASS? THIS IS A MICROSCOPIC LENS, SON! WE'VE SPENT YEARS DEVELOPING THIS TOP SECRET TO MAGNIFY TEN THOUSAND TIMES, SEE?
J-JACK! THE METEORITE! IT... IT MUST HAVE BROUGHT HIM!
A... A MICROSCOPIC VISITOR! THEN... HIS STORY WAS TRUE!
THE END

Get Rid of UGLY PIMPLES this new easy way!

Amazing new medicated lotion developed by a doctor works wonders by clearing up complexion in one week or less!

DON'T let a bad complexion ruin romance, spoil your fun, cause you to be embarrassed, shy or ashamed. If you suffer from *acne*, the common external cause of pimples among young people, try this wonderfully effective medicated lotion that was developed by a practicing physician to clear up his own teen ager's complexion after other methods had failed. It has produced astonishing results for many thousands of others. It is GUARANTEED to help you or it won't cost you a single cent!

Doesn't Show On Your Face

Keraplex is a skin-colored lotion (NOT a greasy salve or ointment!) that is quickly absorbed by the skin and gets right down in the pores where its healing and antiseptic ingredients can go to work. After you have applied it, there is no trace left on the surface. In fact, it makes a perfect powder base for girls and a refreshing after shaving lotion for men . . . actually improves the tone of the skin! It is pleasant and easy to use — leaving your skin soft, clean and fragrant.

Works in SIX Out of SEVEN Cases!

An analysis of RESULTS taken from actual case histories proves that Keraplex is successful in clearing up 6 of every 7 cases of externally caused pimples and blackheads. It tones up the complexion, giving it a healthy, radiant glow. And men — if you suffer from pimples on shoulders and back, Keraplex does an amazingly effective job of clearing them up FAST — without soiling clothes, without messiness or greasiness!

Try This New Method Without Risking A Penny!

Keraplex is GUARANTEED to clear up your skin troubles or there will be NO COST to you whatsoever. If yours happens to be the ONE extra-stubborn case out of seven which Keraplex cannot help in one short week, it will cost you nothing to have tried it. Keraplex is sent to you with that simple, positive GUARANTEE!

SEND NO MONEY

You need send no money with the coupon below. When postman delivers your Keraplex lotion (in plain wrapper marked "Personal"), deposit with him only the modest price indicated below, plus a few cents postage. Then use your Keraplex morning and night for a full week, following the simple directions which will be enclosed.

If you do not SEE RESULTS that delight you — if you are not fully convinced that Keraplex IS clearing up your complexion — just return the empty bottle or unused portion and the purchase price will be refunded in full. Don't delay a single day. The longer you let your skin troubles go, the more difficult it will be to clear them up and get your complexion back to a healthy, clear, unblemished condition! Clip and mail the coupon TODAY. Underwood Laboratories, Inc., Stratford, Conn.

BEFORE

This young man suffered from a severe case of acne for years and tried all the usual "remedies" without success.

AFTER

Same young man after using KERAPLEX twice a day for just one week. Notice the decided improvement—pimples completely gone!

BEFORE

Note more than a dozen blemishes on just one side of this girl's face *before* KERAPLEX was applied.

AFTER

Same girl had used KERAPLEX twice a day for only 5 days when above photo was taken. Note the amazing improvement.

WHAT USERS SAY:

"I was suffering from a severe case of acne . . . and with only 4 days' treatment with Keraplex . . . was completely relieved."—P. S.

"I have been completely satisfied with your lotion to help clear up the pimples on my face." —K. W.

"I have used Keraplex and for the first time in my life my pimples are clearing up in good shape. I can't thank you enough!"—E. S.

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE

UNDERWOOD LABORATORIES, Inc., Dept. 56
STRATFORD, CONN.

Yes! I want to try Keraplex ON APPROVAL. Send size checked below in plain wrapper marked "personal." When it is delivered I will deposit with postman amount indicated below, plus postage. If not delighted with the RESULTS, I will return empty bottle within seven days for a full refund of the purchase price.

☐ Regular Size, $1.98
☐ Double Quantity (Two Bottles), $3.50

Name_____

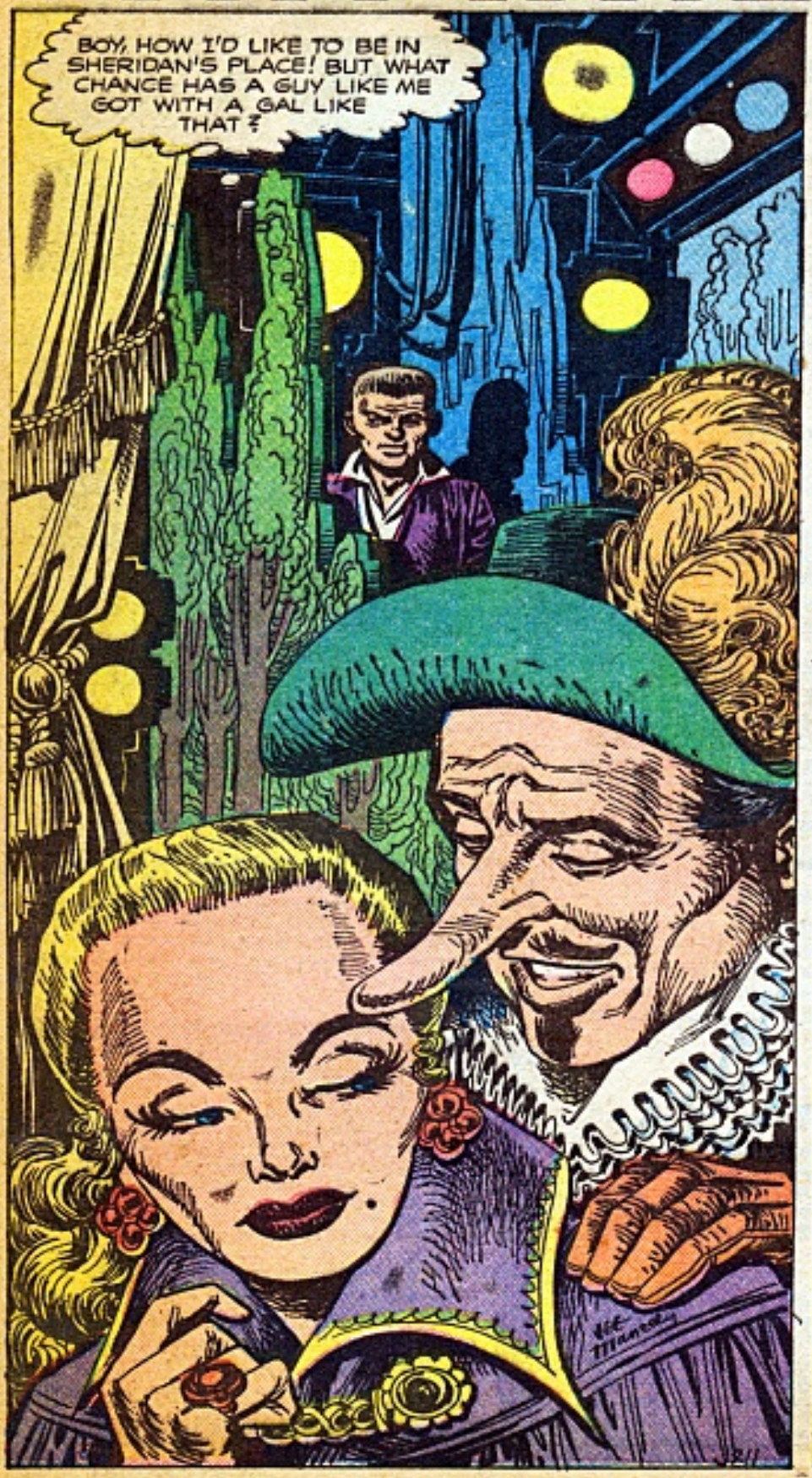
Address_____

City_____ Zone_____ State_____

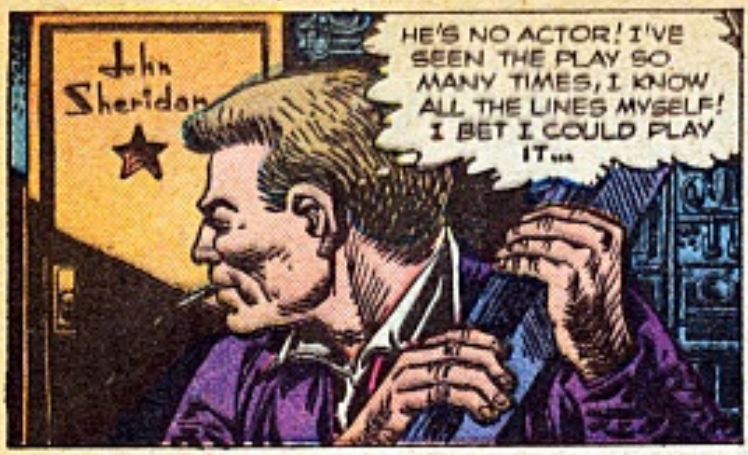
☐ SAVE POSTAGE. Check here if you ENCLOSE payment, in which case we pay postage. Same money-back Guarantee applies!

Payment must be sent with orders going to A.P.O.'s, Canada and foreign countries, due to postal rules.

THE TWO-FACED MAN



JOHN SHERIDAN WAS THE GREATEST CYRANO DE BERGERAC OF HIS TIME AND HE HAD PLAYED IT FOR OVER TWO YEARS! AND DURING THAT TIME JOEL PIKE HAD HATED HIM FOR HIS CLOSENESS TO BELLA DAWNE, HIS CO-STAR!



AND SO A FANTASTIC SCHEME WAS BORN IN THE MIND OF A VENGEFUL MAN! THE NEXT DAY...

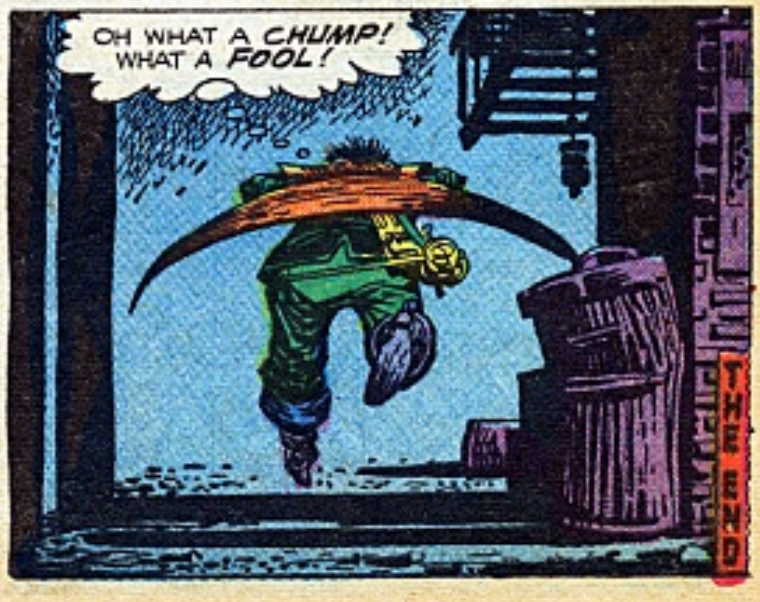
JOEL WAS RIGHT! WITH THE COSTUME AND MAKE-UP, HE *DID* LOOK EXACTLY LIKE JOHN SHERIDAN...

AT LAST! HE APPROACHED THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL ON THE AMERICAN STAGE... AND GOT AWAY WITH HIS GREAT IMPERSONATION...

AND HIS CHANCE CAME VERY SOON... DURING A CROWD SCENE...

BUT SUDDENLY, WITH GREAT DISMAY, JOEL REALIZED THAT WHAT HAD BEEN A FALSE NOSE OF PUTTY, HAD BECOME *REAL!* HIS DECEIT AND TREACHERY HAD TURNED THE TABLES ON HIM, AND HE HAD LOST THE THING HE *COULD* HAVE HAD, IF HE HAD BEEN A MAN OF HONOR!

WHAT WAS THERE LEFT FOR JOEL TO DO? NOTHING... BUT RUN OFF INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE ALLEY... AN ALLEY THAT COULD EITHER END IN A DEAD END... OR TO THE KNOWLEDGE THAT *BAD* GUYS ARE *CHUMPS*, UNTIL THEY LEARN DIFFERENTLY!



631 MOVIE & TV STAR PICTURES 25¢

EXCITING NEW COLLECTION!

For the first time — sensational pictures of your favorite movie and TV stars! What an offer!

FREE! with order

HOME ADDRESSES of over 165 of your favorite movie and TV performers!

300 BIRTHDAYS of the greatest movie and TV stars! Don't delay a minute!

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New York 8, N. Y.

REVERSIBLE AUTO SEAT COVERS

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ORDER FROM MANUFACTURER AND SAVE!
Choice of split or front seat styles only **$2.98** each. Complete set for Front & Rear only **$5.00.** Specify make of car and seat style with each order. Save Money and buy a set today.

STYLE #400
Snake-Zebra Skin Design—Printed Plastic can be used on either side. Gives snappy distinctive dress up appearance. Front or Rear Seat only **$2.98**

STYLE #500
Leopard Cowhide design on Printed Flexton Plastic. Leopard Skin on one side, Cowhide on the other. Either side gives beauty to your car's seats. Never gets dirty for it cleans with a whisk of a damp cloth. Front or Rear. **$2.98**

RUSH ORDER TODAY!

5 day Money Back Guarantee!

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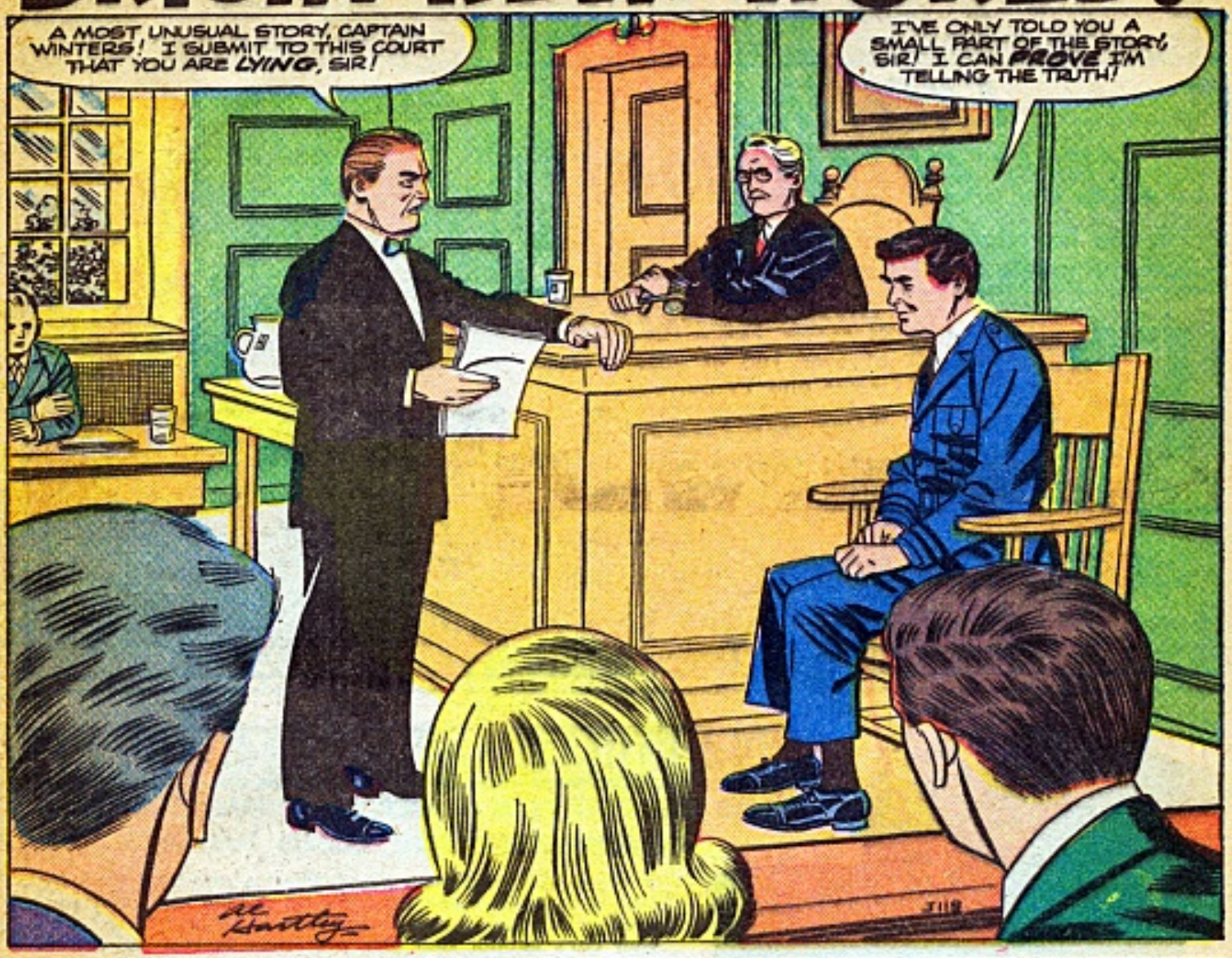
460 Lexington Ave., New York 17, N. Y.
Please send me seat covers I have marked. I can try for 10 days and return for refund of purchase price if I am not satisfied.
☐ Zebra-Snake Design, Reversible
☐ Leopard Cowhide Design, Reversible
☐ Split Seat $2.98 ☐ Solid Seat $2.98
☐ Set (Front & Rear) $5.00
☐ I enclose payment ☐ Send C.O.D.
Name_____
Address_____
City_____ Zone____ State____

NOBODY WOULD BELIEVE CAPTAIN WINTER'S FANTASTIC STORY OF THE PEOPLE WHO FLEW MILLIONS OF MILES TO FIND A...

BRIGHT NEW WORLD!



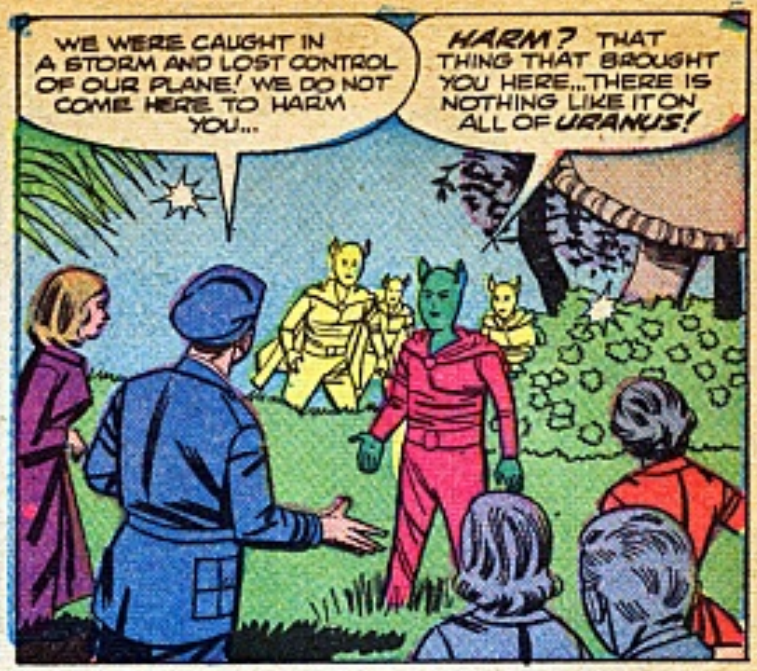
"MY WIFE JUDY WAS ALWAYS HAVING PREMONITIONS BEFORE I CROSSED THE OCEAN..."

"WE WERE OVER MID-ATLANTIC WHEN A STORM HIT! SOME VIOLENT FORCE HURLED US UPWARD AT GREAT SPEED!"

"THE RATE OF ASCENT CAUSED THOSE ABOARD TO PASS OUT...I MANAGED TO REMAIN CONSCIOUS LONG ENOUGH TO TURN ON OXYGEN INTO THE PRESSURIZED CABIN, AND TO SWITCH ON THE AUTOMATIC CONTROLS..."

"I'VE NO IDEA HOW LONG IT WAS BEFORE WE CAME TO, TO FIND THE SHIP HAD LANDED!"

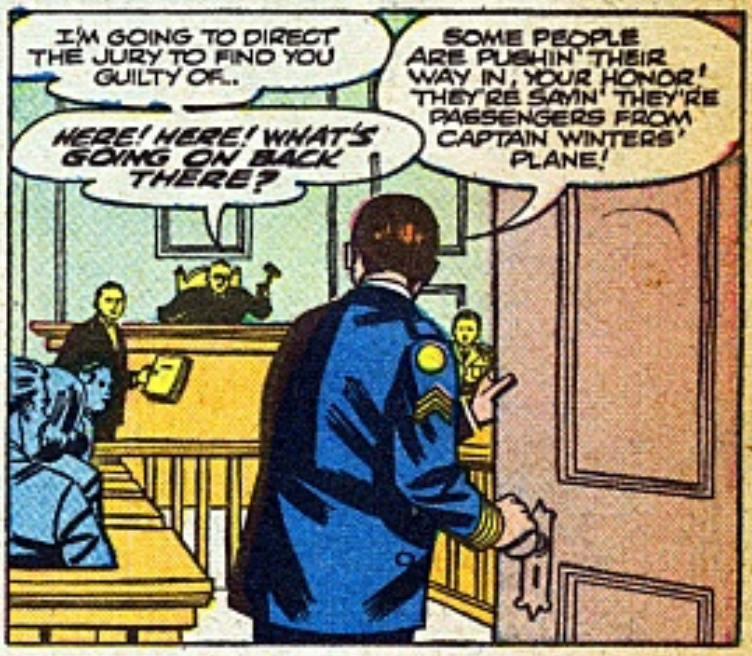
"A MOMENT LATER, THEIR SIGHS OF DELIGHT GAVE WAY TO CRIES OF DISMAY..."



"THE FIRST HINT OF TROUBLE CAME FROM MY CO-PILOT, AT A BANQUET..."

"AT MY PASSENGERS' INSISTENCE, WE STAYED ON URANUS A FULL WEEK!"

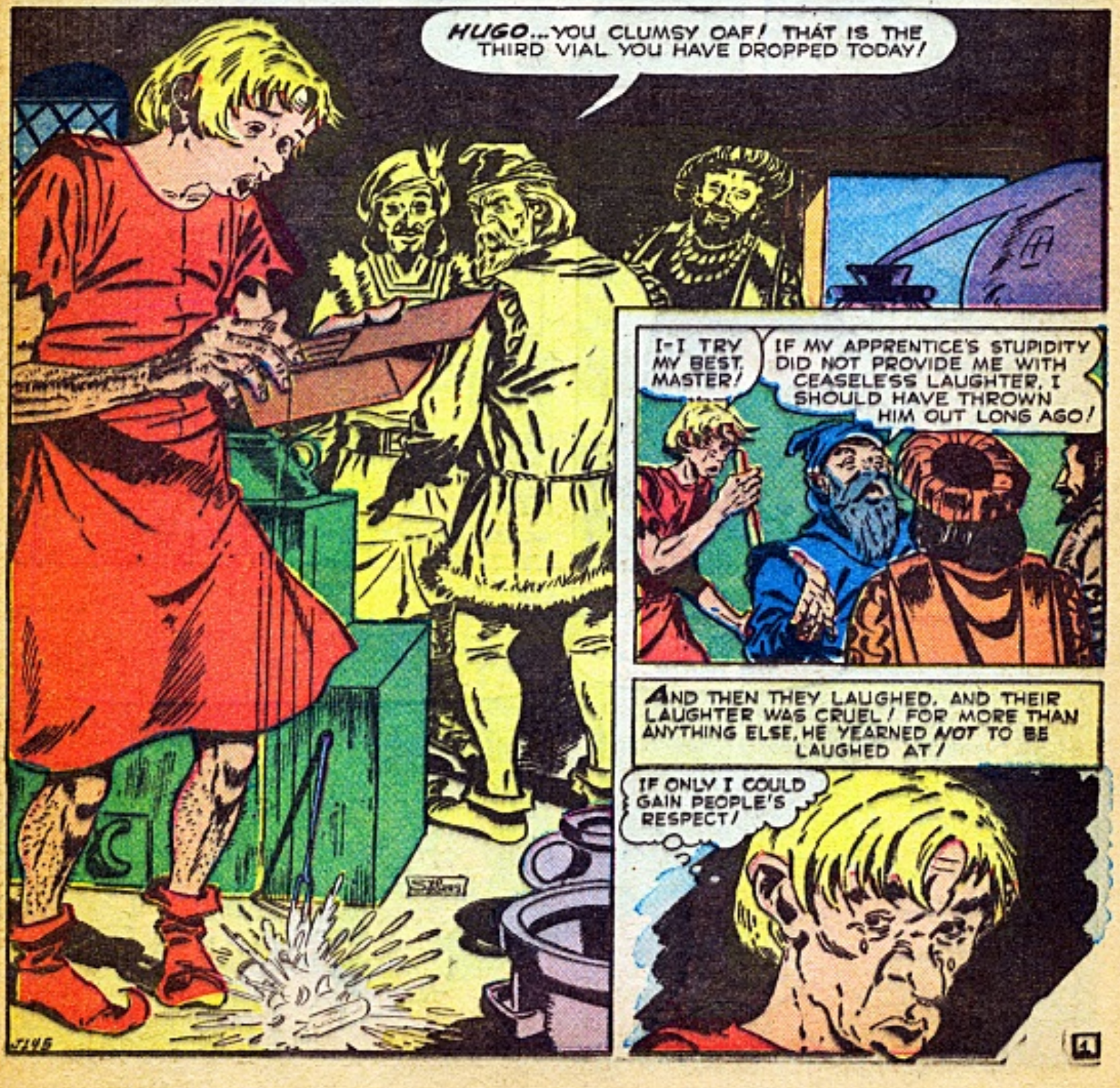
"I TOOK OFF FROM URANUS WITH A FULL PASSENGER LOAD...BUT MY CO-PILOT, MAC JONES STAYED BEHIND! BEFORE LONG I RAN INTO ANOTHER VIOLENT STORM..."

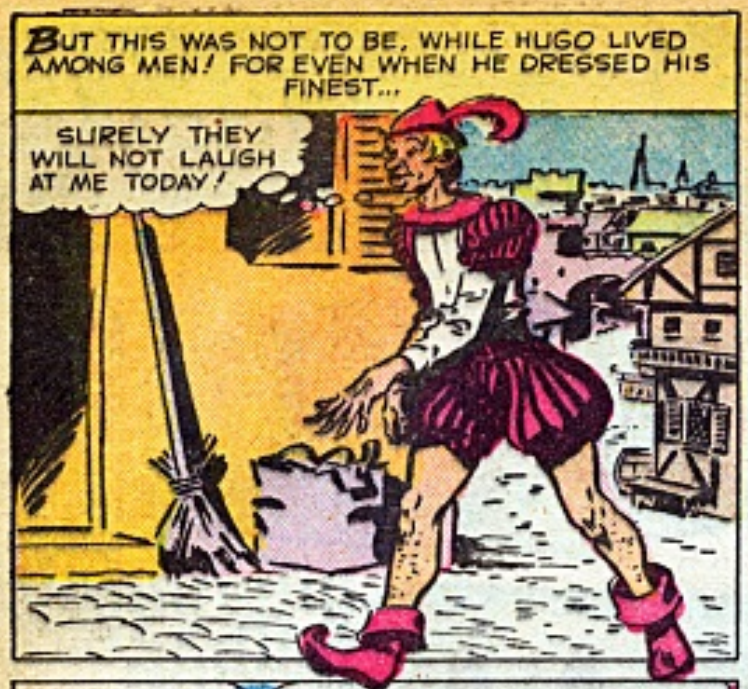


INDEED, CAPTAIN WINTERS' PASSENGERS *DID* TURN UP IN TIME TO SAVE HIM!

HE WAS DESTINED TO REMAIN AN UNFATHOMABLE **MYSTERY** THAT WOULD PERPLEX EVERYBODY ON EARTH DOWN THRU THE AGES! BUT WHILE HE STILL LIVED AMONG MEN, HE WAS ONLY...

THE ALCHEMIST'S APPRENTICE




BUT THIS WAS NOT TO BE, WHILE HUGO LIVED AMONG MEN! FOR EVEN WHEN HE DRESSED HIS FINEST...
SURELY THEY WILL NOT LAUGH AT ME TODAY!

THIS IS THE BEST TIME OF THE DAY TO GET RID OF SLOPS, IS IT NOT, FRIEND?

HEE-HAW-HO-HAW!
THEY'RE LAUGHING AGAIN... THEY'LL ALWAYS LAUGH!

AND WHENEVER HUGO TRIED TO TELL A WITTY TALE...
HAVE YOU HEARD OF...?

THE LAUGHTER ALWAYS CAME TOO SOON! THE JEERING LAUGHTER THAT DROWNED HIM OUT!
IT'S NO USE...THEY'LL NEVER STOP!

HUGO'S MASTER PAID HIM POORLY! BUT HUGO STAYED ON IN THE ALCHEMIST'S SERVICE FOR A VERY SPECIAL REASON!
EVEN THE NOBILITY RESPECT HIM...BECAUSE HE IS AN ALCHEMIST!

ALL HE NEEDED WAS TO LEARN THE LORE OF ALCHEMY, AND NO ONE WOULD EVER LAUGH AT HIM! AND SO LATE ONE NIGHT, HUGO CREPT THROUGH THE SHADOWS TOWARD HIS MASTER'S WORKSHOP!
MY MASTER GUARDS HIS SECRETS CAREFULLY! IF I AM TO LEARN, I MUST TEACH MYSELF!

GIVEN - PREMIUMS or CASH - GIVEN

BOYS · GIRLS · LADIES · MEN

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Complete Fishing Outfits, Flashlights, Basketball Sets, Ukuleles, Watches, Baseballs and Bats, Billfolds (sent postage paid). Other Premiums or Cash Commissions now easily yours. SIMPLY GIVE pictures with White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE easily sold at 35 cents a box (with picture) and remit amount asked under premium shown in catalog sent with your order postage paid by us to start. Our 60th year. Wilson Chem. Co., Dept. 148-P, Tyrone, Pa.

BE FIRST

MAIL COUPON TODAY

ACT NOW

OUR 60th YEAR

WE ARE RELIABLE

1000 Shot Daisy Repeater Air Rifles with tube of shot, Candid Cameras with Carrying Case, Pocket Watches, Dolls, School Boxes, Radios and Record Players, Rings, (sent postage paid). Many other Premiums or Cash Commissions now easily yours. SIMPLY GIVE beautiful art pictures suitable for framing with White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE used for chaps and mild burns for over 60 years and sold to friends, neighbors and relatives at 35 cents a box (with picture) and remit per catalog sent with your order postage paid by us to start. We are reliable. Our 60th year. Be first. Act now. MAIL COUPON TODAY. WILSON CHEMICAL CO., Dept. 148-8, TYRONE, PA.

GIVEN

WE ARE RELIABLE

OUR 60th YEAR

CASH - GIVEN - PREMIUMS

Radios, Billfolds, Basketball Outfits, Swim Masks, Food Choppers, Softballs, Blankets, Pen & Pencil Sets, Jewelry, Clocks, all sent postage paid. MANY, MANY other valuable Premiums or Cash Commissions now easily yours. SIMPLY GIVE beautiful art pictures with White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE for chaps and mild burns. So easily sold to friends, neighbors, relatives at 35 cents a box (with picture) and remit per catalog sent with your starting order postage paid by us. MAIL COUPON TODAY. WILSON CHEM. CO., Dept. 148-S, TYRONE, PA.

ACT NOW BE FIRST

Wrist Watches, Ukuleles, Fishing Sets, Bike Lights, Genuine 22 Cal. Rifles, all sent postage paid. SIMPLY GIVE beautiful art pictures with White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE easily sold at 35 cents a box (with picture) and remit per catalog sent with your order postage paid by us to start. Mail coupon today. Our 60th big year. We trust you. WILSON CHEMICAL CO., Dept. 05-148 TYRONE, PA.

A SPECIAL OFFER TO ALL MARVEL COMIC READERS

LOOK A REAL LIVE PONY

ACT NOW

ONCE IN A LIFETIME OFFER

MAIL COUPON TODAY

Wilson Chem. Co., Dept. 05-148, Tyrone, Pa. Date _____

Gentlemen:—Please send me on trial 14 colorful art pictures with 14 boxes of White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE to sell at 35c a box (with picture). I will remit amount within 30 days, select a Premium or keep Cash Commission as fully explained under Premium wanted in catalog sent with my order postage paid to start.

NAME _____ AGE _____

ST. _____ R.D. _____ BOX _____

TOWN _____ ZONE NO. _____ STATE _____

Print LAST Name Here

Paste on a postal card or mail in an envelope NOW

ACT NOW

Our 60th Year

OUR 60th YEAR

BUT EVEN AS HUGO WAS WORKING...
MY OAFISH APPRENTICE PRESUMES TO DELVE INTO MY MYSTERIES! LET US WATCH...WE SHALL SOON LAUGH HEARTILY!

AND SO THEY WATCHED... AND LAUGHED!
HEE-HAW-HO-HAW!

IT WAS A CRUSHING BLOW! FOR A LONG TIME AFTER THAT ILL-FATED NIGHT, POOR HUGO KEPT TO HIMSELF...CEASELESSLY BROODING!

BUT THE DESIRE NOT TO BE LAUGHED AT KEPT STIRRING INSIDE HIM...UNTIL AT LAST...
THE MASTER SLEEPS! I'LL TRY AGAIN!

BUT EVEN AS POOR HUGO WAS APPROACHING THE CLIMAX OF HIS FIRST EXPERIMENT...
FOOTSTEPS... AND LAUGHTER! THE MASTER'S COMING... WITH FRIENDS!

HUGO WAS DETERMINED TO FINISH BEFORE THEIR LAUGHTER COULD CRUSH HIM AGAIN! WORKING FRENZIEDLY, HE POURED THE CONTENTS OF VIAL AFTER VIAL INTO THE FROTHING MIXTURE! WAS IT ANY WONDER THAT POOR HUGO GRASPED ONE WRONG VIAL?

BAPPOOM!

SO HUGO WAS HAPPY AT LAST! AND HIS HAPPINESS WAS NEVER-ENDING, FOR THE EXPLOSION SEEMED TO HAVE GRANTED HIM A STRANGE EXISTENCE!

the ART Expert

EZRA STANDISH was a man of independent means. He was also the sole owner of the Standish Art Galleries which boasted a fine collection of Rembrandts, Rubens, Vermeers and Van Goghs. He had a coveted reputation as the world's foremost authority on precious paintings. Wealthy patrons of the arts came to him to have their landscapes and portraits appraised. On his word alone, they were adjudged genuine or discarded as cheap copies of an original master's work. On his word alone, fortunes were paid for art treasures.

Ezra Standish had prestige and power. Yet he was an unhappy man. Nobody suspected that Ezra was a lonely, old bachelor. He had surrounded himself with beautiful paintings all his life, but he had been too busy to find beauty in life itself. He had found no time for love or marriage, and now in his advanced years, his home was barren except for the beautiful canvases that hung on his walls.

On one particular night, however he forgot his personal problems. An original Leonardo Da Vinci painting had been discovered in Italy, and after a frantic week of negotiating, Ezra had purchased the portrait. The almost priceless art possession now hung on the center wall of his living room, and he stood before it, studying each perfect detail.

The portrait was of a man who had obviously occupied royal or noble station in life. Ezra was fascinated by the sardonic smile on the man's face and the particularly glittering eyes.

"It's so life-like, I'd almost expect him to step from the frame and sit down with me for a game of chess," he mused. "And his smile! It's as though he were enjoying a colossal trick played on me."

He stepped closer to the canvas and rubbed at the oils in the lower corner of the painting. His heart suddenly pounded as some of the paint came away on his fingers. Often, the great masters painted some of their works on top of a previous failure. Was it possible there was another painting on the sub-coating of the canvas?

But why would the paint still be fresh if this was a genuine Da Vinci? Certainly after the centuries that had passed, the paint should be hard and dry. Was it possible that he, an authority on art, had been duped? Was it possible that he had been fooled by a duplication by a rank, unknown amateur? If such news ever leaked out, his reputation would be ruined.

He began to rub furiously at the corner. The paint came away freely. He knew immediately that the paint was fresh. He studied the painting closely with a pocket magnifier and then clapped a hand to his head in dismay.

"It's a fake, an utter hoax!" he groaned. "I could go back and sue the man who sold me the painting, but my prestige would be shattered. It would be better if I destroyed it or dumped it in the ocean. That way, my folly would never be discovered. But how could I account for its loss to the insurance company . . . particularly after *I* appraised its value at a quarter of a million dollars?"

"Please discard those wild notions," a voice spoke up. "I have no desire to be mutilated or dropped in the ocean. I find it quite comfortable here, and I'd like you to continue to be pleased by me."

"What's that? Who spoke then?" Ezra stammered, his eyes roving over the living room.

"I did, sir! Right above you. You purchased me and I am your humble servant."

Ezra's startled gaze focused on the smiling face of his new portrait. "But I can't believe . . . you spoke to me. You're just a figure in a painting, a figment of an artist's imagination."

"I'm just as real as you want me to be, sir," the painting replied. "I pledged myself silence as long as you admired me and kept me here. But I am constrained to speak now that you think of disposing of me."

"But I *can't* keep you," Ezra protested. "You're just an imitation, a copy of a real Da Vinci. Any of the experts will be able to tell you're not genuine. I'll be discredited."

"But what does it matter that I'm not the creation of Da Vinci?" the painting persisted. "As long as I give you pleasure, is that not the real basis of an art treasure?"

"You just don't understand!" Ezra wailed. "It makes all the difference in the world if an artist like Da Vinci painted you instead of an unknown. There's a difference in craftsmanship, detail, mixture of color, and . . ."

". . . life-like quality," the figure finished for him. "Experts

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT STORY...

CAESAR OCTAVIUS RULED ROME AS A TYRANT, TRUSTING ONLY IN THE WISDOM AND FRIENDSHIP OF MARK CLAUDIUS... BUT NO WISDOM HAD THE STRENGTH TO OVERCOME THE STRANGE POWER OF A GREAT MAGICIAN!

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CAVE?

THEN MYSTICUS CHANTED SOFTLY...
OH, SECRET POWERS OF THE UNIVERSE, REMOVE NOW THESE CHAINS!
HA! THIS IS A SIMPLE FEAT PERFORMED EVEN BY THE LOWLIEST MAGICIAN IN ROME!

REMOVE NOW THE SOLDIERS' SPEARS... GIVE THEM SERPENTS IN THEIR PLACE!
A MERE ILLUSION! BE WARNED, CAESAR, THIS MAN IS A DANGEROUS SPY!

I HAVE AN EVEN GREATER POWER, CAESAR! I CAN GO INTO THE FUTURE! ALREADY I HAVE SEEN SHIPS OF WAR THAT FLY IN THE SKY AND CHARIOTS WHICH NO ARROWS CAN PENETRATE!

IF YOU WANT PROOF, LET SOMEONE YOU TRUST COME WITH ME TO THE GREAT CAVE IN THE HILL NORTH OF ROME!
MARC CLAUDIUS, YOU MUST GO WITH HIM!

I... GO WITH THIS MAN? BUT YOU NEED ME HERE, CAESAR!
YOU ARE MY ONLY TRUE FRIEND AND I WOULD BELIEVE NO OTHER MAN! I COMMAND YOU TO GO WITH MYSTICUS!

CAESAR COMMANDED, AND MARC CLAUDIUS OBEYED!

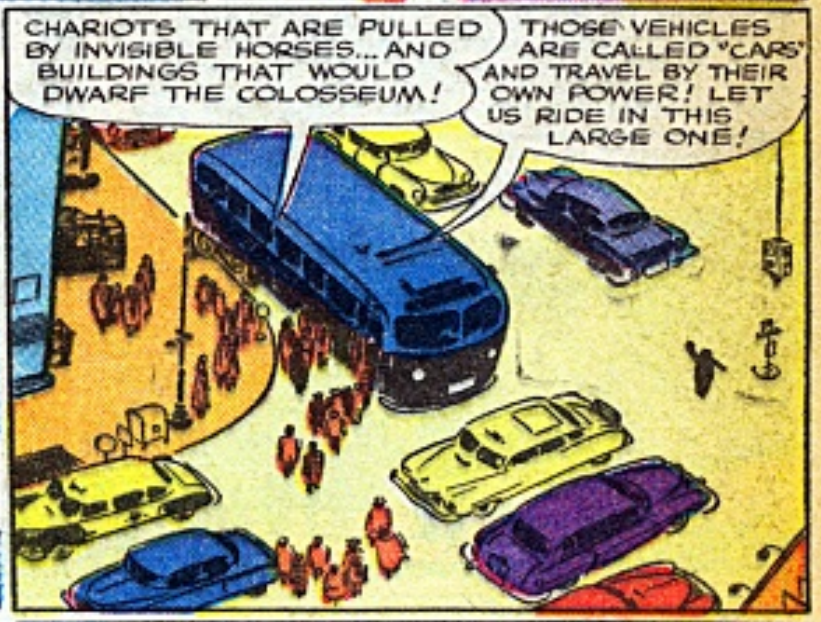
GOOD FRIEND... IF THIS MAGICIAN DOES YOU HARM, HE'LL HAVE ME TO ANSWER TO UPON HIS RETURN!
YOUR WORDS ARE A GREAT COMFORT, CAESAR!

MARC CLAUDIUS FOLLOWED MYSTICUS INTO THE DARK REACHES OF THE CAVE, AND HE TREMBLED AS THE MAGICIAN CHANTED...
MAGIC POWERS OF THE UNIVERSE, I CALL UPON THEE! CARRY ME INTO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY!

THERE CAME A STRONG BLAST OF WIND FROM THE CAVE, A FLASH OF LIGHT AND SMOKE!
CAPTAIN, YOU WILL POST MEN AT THE CAVE! THE MAGICIAN MYSTICUS MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO SLIP BY YOU!

MEANWHILE...
WHAT WAS THAT MONSTROUS CONTRIVANCE THAT ROARED BY?
IT'S CALLED A "TRAIN" AND IT CARRIES PEOPLE FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER!

THE "SUBWAY" IS TRULY A MARVEL, MYSTICUS!... BUT DID I REALLY SEE IT?
BE ASSURED, SIRE, YOU ARE IN THE FUTURE! AND THE MOST AMAZING THINGS ARE YET TO BE SEEN!


CHARIOTS THAT ARE PULLED BY INVISIBLE HORSES... AND BUILDINGS THAT WOULD DWARF THE COLOSSEUM!
THOSE VEHICLES ARE CALLED "CARS" AND TRAVEL BY THEIR OWN POWER! LET US RIDE IN THIS LARGE ONE!

LATER...
WAIT! I WILL NOT BOARD A VESSEL THAT HAS NO SAILS! WE WOULD DRIFT FOREVER!
THAT IS A "FERRY BOAT"! IT IS MADE TO MOVE BY STEAM AND MACHINERY!
FERRY
EP RIGHT

THERE IS YET MUCH TO BE SEEN! THAT ROAR IN THE SKY... YES, LOOK UP, MARC CLAUDIUS!

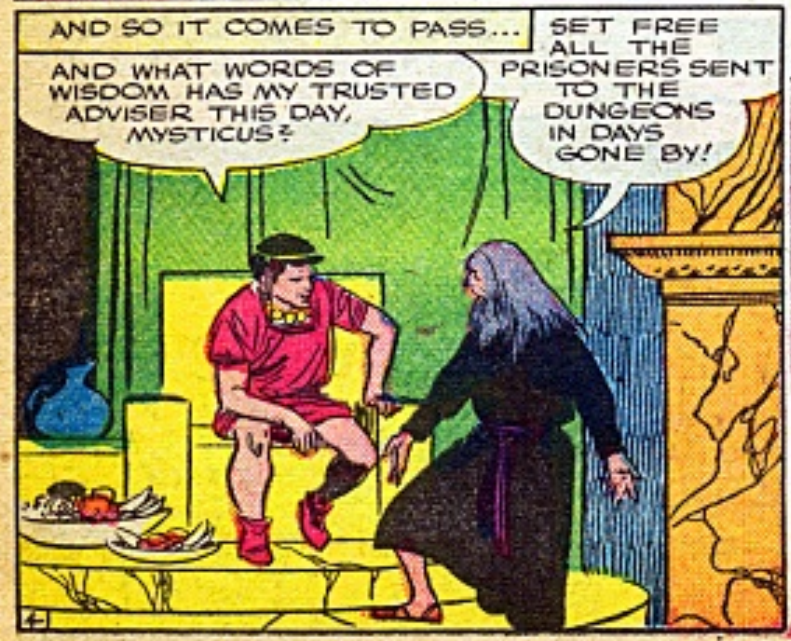
THEY CALL IT A "PLANE"! THAT IS ONE OF THE CHARIOTS OF WAR THAT FLIES IN THE SKY! IT CARRIES "BOMBS" WHICH BLOW UP WITH THE POWER OF VESUVIUS!

WHAT ONE COULD NOT DO WITH SUCH WEAPONS AGAINST THE ENEMIES!
LET US GO NOW TO SEE THE CHARIOTS THAT NO WEAPONS CAN PIERCE!

BEFORE LONG...
THOSE ARE CALLED "TANKS"... THEY HAVE THINGS CALLED "GUNS" AND "CANNON" WHICH CAN ALSO PUT ENEMY LEGIONS TO FLIGHT!
WITH SUCH CHARIOTS, AN EMPEROR COULD REMAIN SECURE ON HIS THRONE FOREVER!

IN THE TIME OF MARC CLAUDIUS'S ABSENCE, CAESAR OCTAVIUS RETURNED TO THE GREAT CAVE EVERY DAY! HE REGRETTED HAVING SENT HIS FRIEND INTO THE BLACK CAVERN AND BEMOANED HIS LOSS! THEN, ONE DAY...
W-WHAT IS THAT ROARING FROM THE CAVE? STAND FAST, MY SOLDIERS!

HA! THE TROOPS FLEE IN DISORDER, MYSTICUS! RADIO THE PLANES AND TELL THEM TO HOLD THOSE BOMBS!


AND SO IT COMES TO PASS...
AND WHAT WORDS OF WISDOM HAS MY TRUSTED ADVISER THIS DAY, MYSTICUS?
SET FREE ALL THE PRISONERS SENT TO THE DUNGEONS IN DAYS GONE BY!

SO ALL PRISONERS WERE FREED... ALL BUT ONE!
I SHOULD HAVE FREED THEM BEFORE! WITH THIS POWER CLAUDIUS HAD OVERTHROWN ALL MY TYRANNY!
THE END

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...CONTINUED

for centuries have been fascinated by the mystery of the Mona Lisa smile. To all men, her smile has a different meaning. Yet all men find her fascinating. Why should it be different with me? What difference does it make that Da Vinci didn't paint me? You said I was amazingly lifelike. Now, you *know* that I am. Just think how fascinated all your friends will be when they gaze upon me. They'll be so impressed with me, they'll never stop to study me as closely as you did. And if they should by some chance . . ."

"You wouldn't talk to them?" Ezra gasped. "Then they'd know for sure. I couldn't let *that* happen."

"Why not?" the figure argued. "They'd consider you a genius. You'd own the only talking picture in the world. Da Vinci or not, they'd consider me the most unusual creation in history."

The words sunk slowly into Ezra's mind. He gazed solemnly at the painting. "I guess you're right at that. But I choose not to exhibit you. I'll neither boast about you nor confess that I was fooled. But your words have convinced me that I should keep you as a companion and not as an art treasure. You will not have to worry about your future."

"Thank you so much," the figure replied. "I would welcome other people to admire me, but I certainly shall be content with your company and approval."

And so the odd relationship began. Ezra Standish's whole life changed. His preoccupation with business waned. His colleagues noted the change in him and attributed it to advanced age.

Sometimes, he spent the evening in long discussions with his new friend. They covered art, poetry, politics and religion. At intervals, they settled down to games of chess, with the figure calling his moves from his canvas.

Ezra was careful to conceal his activities behind closed doors so that his servants' suspicions would not be aroused. But he could not conceal the fact that he was a far happier man than he had ever been before.

And then tragedy struck. It came suddenly. Thieves timed the departure of his servants from the house perfectly, and they stole the priceless painting. When Ezra came home and found it gone, he was inconsolable.

He called the police and pleaded with them to recover his painting. He notified his insurance agents that he did not want the money in return for his treasure. He announced a reward to anyone who would return the painting to him.

Finally, Ezra's hopes were realized. The tremendous publicity attending the theft prevented the robbers from selling the painting to a legitimate broker. In desperation, they turned to a dealer in stolen property. By chance, police checked his establishment just when the thieves arrived with the portrait.

Ezra's joy was unconfined. His painting was returned and he was happy to pay the reward. His ultimate pleasure came when his painting was hung on his living room wall once more. Finally, he was alone with the familiar figure.

"I understand that there was quite an uproar after I disappeared," he said slyly. "I was disappointed in you though, telling the newspaper I was a priceless Da Vinci. I thought that you had gotten over that. Did you only want me back because you were afraid someone would discover I wasn't really a Da Vinci? Or were you worried about your investment?"

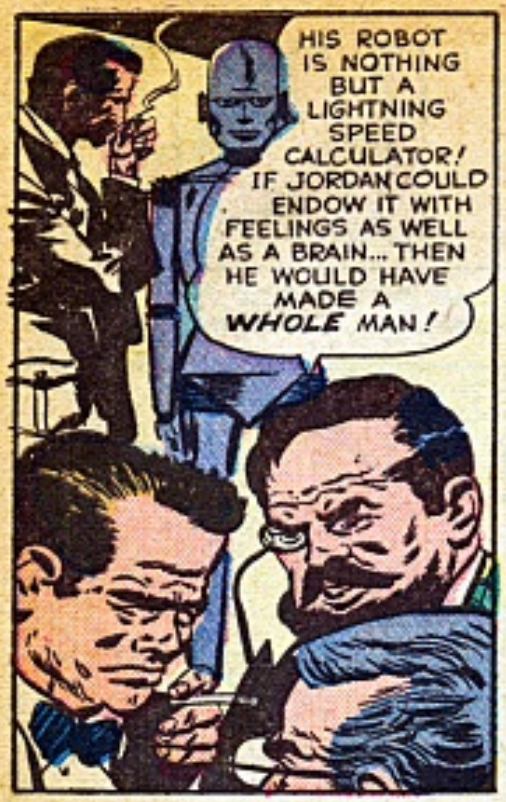
"I'm disappointed in *you*," Ezra rejoined softly. "If I were interested in the money, I could have collected the insurance. And I'm no longer concerned with what the art critics would say about you.

"I wanted you back because I missed you. I've learned that true, warm companionship means more than money or prestige to me."

The records show that Ezra Standish retired shortly after and lived a long and happy life.

THE END J-244

THE MECHANICAL MAN!


HIS ROBOT IS NOTHING BUT A LIGHTNING SPEED CALCULATOR! IF JORDAN COULD ENDOW IT WITH FEELINGS AS WELL AS A BRAIN... THEN HE WOULD HAVE MADE A WHOLE MAN!

I COULDN'T HELP OVERHEARING! GENTLEMEN... I CREATED THE MECHANICAL MAN IN RESPONSE TO A NEED EXPRESSED BY INDUSTRY! IN MY CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THIS CONGRESS, IT IS MY DUTY TO KEEP SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FROM BEING DIVERTED FROM SOCIALLY USEFUL PROJECTS!

AND SO, SINCE FURTHER EXPERIMENTATION WOULD SERVE NO SOCIAL FUNCTION, YOU WILL STAY JUST AS YOU ARE. MY MECHANICAL MAN... A CALCULATOR... NOTHING ELSE!

JORDAN, PLEASE... DON'T CLOSE YOUR MIND TO WHAT CAN BE DONE WITH HIM!
I'M SORRY... EVEN TO THINK OF IT WOULD BE WASTEFUL! GOOD NIGHT, GENTLEMEN!

BUT THE SEED HAD BEEN PLANTED! AND DESPITE HIS FIRM RESOLVE, JORDAN KEPT TURNING IN HIS BED THAT NIGHT...
A WHOLE MAN! HAVE I THE POWER TO MAKE A WHOLE MAN?

THEN DAYLIGHT WAS STREAMING THROUGH THE WINDOW AND HE FOUND HIMSELF STUMBLING TOWARD THE DESK...
I-I'LL DO IT! JUST THIS ONCE... I'LL EXPERIMENT FOR EXPERIMENTATION'S SAKE!

BUT THIS WAS NO SIMPLE PROJECT... IT REQUIRED TOTAL, SUSTAINED CONCENTRATION! AND MONTHS LATER...

MARK, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN DOWN AT YOUR OFFICE FOR MONTHS! WITHOUT A PERMANENT CHAIRMAN ALL RESEARCH IS BEING NEGLECTED!

YOU'LL HAVE TO GET ALONG WITHOUT ME, UNTIL I'VE DEVISED A MAN WITH *FEELINGS* ...AS WELL AS *BRAINS!*

IT TOOK MORE THAN A YEAR, BUT AT LAST HE HAD DUPLICATED THE FEELINGS-CENTER OF A HUMAN BRAIN BY AN INTRICATE MAZE OF WIRES POWERED BY ATOMIC ENERGY!

NOW... FOR THE *TEST!*

THE TEST WAS SUCCESSFUL! IN RAPID SUCCESSION, RESPONDING TO CONTROLLED EMOTIONAL STIMULI, THE MECHANICAL MAN REGISTERED FEAR... LOVE... HATRED...

BUT THE YEARS OF CEASELESS WORK HAD TAKEN A TOLL ON JORDAN! THE PAST FEW WEEKS HE HAD KEPT GOING ON SHEER WILL POWER ALONE! AND NOW THAT HIS TASK WAS DONE...

I-I'M BLACKING OUT!

THE NEXT THING JORDAN KNEW, HE WAS IN A HOSPITAL BED, SURROUNDED BY ANXIOUS COLLEAGUES...

MY MECHANICAL MAN! WHERE IS HE?

YOU'RE A SICK MAN... YOU'VE BEEN FLAT ON YOUR BACK FOR A LONG TIME!

WHERE IS MY MECHANICAL MAN?
WE DON'T KNOW! YOU WERE FOUND ON THE FLOOR OF YOUR LAB... THE WINDOW WAS OPEN... YOUR ROBOT WAS GONE... HE HASN'T BEEN SEEN SINCE!

STAY IN BED... YOU'RE STILL WEAK!
I'M STILL PERMANENT CHAIRMAN... I'VE NEGLECTED THE CONGRESS LONG ENOUGH... I HAVE TO GET BACK ON THE JOB!

THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT! A NEW MAN HAS STEPPED INTO YOUR SHOES! HE'S AS BRILLIANT AS YOU!
I MUST GO TO HIM!

THERE WAS NO HOLDING JORDAN BACK!
HAVE TO MAKE SURE HE'S A RESPONSIBLE MAN... THAT HE WON'T LET SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH BE DIVERTED FROM SOCIALLY USEFUL PROJECTS... AS I DID!
COME IN, MR. JORDAN...
WORLD CONGRE OF SCIENCE
CHAIRMA

I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT!
HE'S MY MECHANICAL MAN! NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, THEY SAID! BUT THEY DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS!

HE HAS THE BRAINS FOR THE JOB... BUT HE'S BEEN AROUND FOR SO SHORT A TIME, HE COULDN'T POSSIBLY HAVE A SUFFICIENTLY DEVELOPED SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY!

JUST THEN, JORDAN'S EYES BLINKED OPEN!
WHEW... WHAT A NIGHTMARE! BUT I'M GLAD I HAD IT! NOW I REALLY KNOW WHY...
...YOU HAVE TO STAY JUST AS YOU ARE! A CALCULATOR... NOTHING ELSE!
THE END

HERE IS THE KIND OF HE-MAN BODY

YOU CAN HAVE!

WHAT'S THE SECRET?

You can broaden your shoulders, strengthen your back; add inches to your chest, develop a vise-like grip, make those legs of yours powerful, shoot new strength into your backbone, exercise those inner organs, cram your body full of vigor and red-blooded vitality! The new "home gym method" that's the sure best and most inexpensive. It has changed many a 90 lb. weakling to a he-man. It has turned many a skinny boy into a marvelous physical specimen. It can do the same for you! *No $50.00 courses. No expensive gadgets.* You simply use the inexpensive home gym which helps you use the dormant muscle power in your own body. You will watch it increase in double quick time into solid muscle. The home gym method is easy! Only 10 minutes a day in your own home! You can use the home gym method in the morning or at night for no longer than it takes to shave or get dressed—when you use the home gym method you'll be using the method used by many of the greatest athletes, used by football players, wrestlers, fighters and men who keep in trim!

No matter how skinny or flabby you are the amazing new muscle power body builder can help you gain inches of solid muscle in double quick time — only 10 minutes a day!

THE HOME GYM IS SOMETHING EVERYONE WHO WANTS A BETTER BUILD WILL PRIZE! JUST MAILING THE COUPON MAY MEAN THE TURNING POINT IN YOUR LIFE!

NO EXPENSIVE GADGETS! NO $30 TO $100 COURSE!

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